

Remarks

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 8 and 15 are directed to allowable subject matter. Further, in the final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-5 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) based on U.S. Patent No. 6,781,992 to Rana et al. ("Rana"); rejected claims 18-24 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) based on U.S. Patent No. 6,832,261 to Westbrook et al. ("Westbrook"); rejected claims 6, 7, 9-11, 13, 14, 16, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rana in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,026,477 to Kyker et al. ("Kyker"); and rejected claim 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Westbrook in view of Kyker.

By this Amendment, Applicant proposes amending claims 1, 7, 9, 12, 14, and 16, and canceling claims 6, 8, 13, 15, and 18-26 without prejudice or disclaimer. More specifically, Applicant proposes amending claims 1 and 12 to substantially incorporate the features of the now-canceled claims 6 and 8 (claim 1) or claims 13 and 15 (claim 12). Claims 7, 9, 14, and 16 are proposed to be amended to correct their dependency in view of the cancellation of claims 6 or 13.

Upon entry of this Amendment After Final, claims 1-5, 7, 9-12, 14, and 16 would be pending.

Applicant submits that the rejections of claims 18-26 are obviated in view of the cancellation of these claims.

In view of the proposed amendments to claims 1 and 12, Applicant submits that the rejections of these claims and their dependent claims based on prior art are

obviated, as these claims now each recite features that the Examiner indicated are allowable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, this application should be in condition for allowance.

*Conclusion*

Applicant respectfully requests that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing claims 1-5, 7, 9-12, 14, and 16 in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1070 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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